



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of Montgomery County, MD, Inc.

**Testimony on Proposed Redistricting Maps
Montgomery County Redistricting Commission
September 1, 2011**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization whose goal is to increase informed public participation in government. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed County Council redistricting maps for submission to the Council. We are especially happy that you are holding a public hearing after the maps were made available.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland, several years ago adopted the standards of equal population, contiguity and compactness against which election districts should be held. We agree that both of the maps proposed meet with the contiguity standard and are well within the equal population standard as accepted by the courts although the Spence map equalizes the populations to a greater degree than does the Kahwaty map.

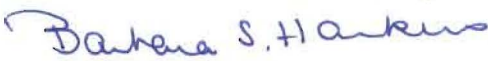
Where we see the difference between the two proposals is in the compactness standard. By no stretch of the imagination can District 2 in the Kahwaty map be considered to be compact. It covers a very large geographic area and it surrounds another district on three sides. It is hard to imagine that a district councilmember could adequately cover or represent such a large and spread out area.

We therefore believe that the Spence map better meets the standards. We regret that more detailed and descriptive demographic statistics were not provided for the maps. We think that citizens may have gained a better insight into their implications.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak tonight.

Sincerely,


Elaine A. Apter
Co-President


Barbara S. Hankins
Co-President